



Save the Sound[®]

Action for our region's environment.

**Testimony of Save the Sound
Before the Transportation Committee**

In Support of

S.B. 1083 AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TRANSPORTATION CARBON BUDGET FOR THE STATE

**Submitted by Charles J. Rothenberger
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Save the Sound is a nonprofit organization representing over 4,200 member households and 10,000 activists statewide. Our mission is to protect and improve the land, air, and water of Connecticut and the entire Long Island Sound region. We use legal and scientific expertise and bring citizens together to achieve results that benefit our environment for current and future generations.

Co-Chairs Cohen and Lemar, Ranking Members Hwang and Kennedy, and members of the Environment Committee:

Save the Sound supports SB 1083, which directs the Commissioner of DOT, in consultation with the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection, to establish a transportation carbon budget for the state and to adopt regulations to ensure that transportation projects undertaken by the state, MPOs, and municipalities meet the standards established in the carbon budget.

Connecticut has committed to reducing its greenhouse gas ("GHG") emission by 45% by 2040 and 80% by 2050.¹ The transportation sector is currently the single largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Connecticut, accounting for approximately 37% of economy-wide emissions.² The primary source of these emissions is the use of fossil fuels in passenger cars and light-duty trucks, although emissions from medium and heavy-duty vehicles contribute a disproportionate share to these emissions.

This bill is critical since, as noted in Connecticut's most recent inventory of greenhouse gas emissions, the state is currently not on track to meet its emissions reduction requirements pursuant to the Global Warming Solutions Act. "Between 2014 and 2018, transportation sector emissions actually increased by 3 percent, which means that

¹ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 22a-200a.

² Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, *2018 Connecticut Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory* (2021). Available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DEEP/climatechange/GHG_Emissions_Inventory_2018.pdf.

Connecticut will now need to reduce the sector's emissions by 32 percent (roughly 5 MMTCO₂e) to achieve the GC3 target.”³

As we attempt to meet our greenhouse gas reduction obligations and protect our most vulnerable citizens from pollution, it is critical to ensure that the state's progress towards meeting its greenhouse gas reduction and environmental goals is not hindered or undone by the individual decisions made by various state agencies. Despite the clear climate, environmental, health and clean energy goals that we have adopted as law and policy, we continue to design our transportation system in manner that increase emissions in our communities – adding to the burden of already poor air quality. Rather than moving us closer to our goals, such actions merely add to the urgency and difficulty of the choices we will face in the future.

Establishing a carbon budget for the largest current source of our climate emissions will provide meaningful guidance in reducing transportation emissions and encourage a transformation in our transportation planning that will provide both environmental and public health benefits. Without a clear and consistent plan to reduce emissions from the transportation sector, and a requirement to design our transportation system around those reductions, we simply won't succeed. As noted in the Final Report of the Mitigation Strategies Working Group of the Governor's Council on Climate Change:

Much steeper emission reductions will be needed to keep us on track to reach our 2030 and 2050 targets. To ensure that we continue to make the necessary progress, the state must have a disciplined and consistent approach to prioritizing mitigation policies and evaluating the climate impact of proposed actions.
...

National and subnational actors are adopting increasingly comprehensive approaches to ensure that they remain on track to fulfill their GHG emissions-reduction obligations. While adoption of comprehensive GHG reduction and reporting requirements is critical to addressing needed emissions reductions, governments are recognizing that comprehensive compliance frameworks also are essential to ensure that discrete actions by agencies do not inadvertently cause states to diverge from the path toward to their formal reduction targets.⁴

Save the Sound appreciates the Committee's focus on addressing climate emissions from the transportation sector through this bill, and we urge the Committee to favorably report the bill out of Committee.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Charles J. Rothenberger

³ Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, 2018 Connecticut Greenhouse Gas Inventory at 4 (2021). Available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DEEP/climatechange/GHG_Emissions_Inventory_2018.pdf.

⁴ Final Report, Progress on Mitigation Strategies Working Group, Governor's Council on Climate Change, at 14 (November 2020).